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1914





KANSAS POEMS

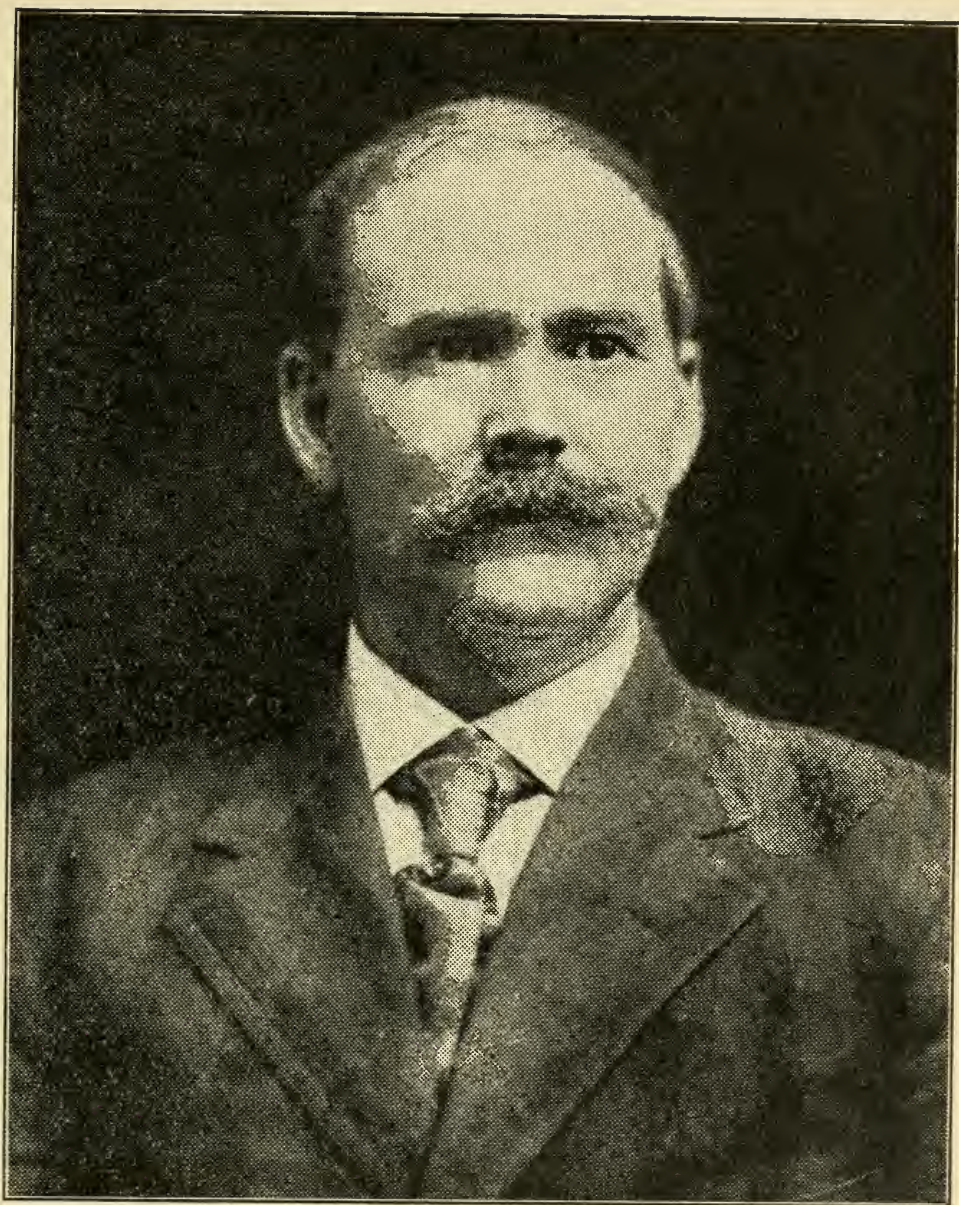


**BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY
HARRIS, KANSAS**

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EDWARD THOMAS FAY

PREFACE

BY THE AUTHOR

I have been requested to publish my poems in pamphlet form, and hope they will offend no one. Some of the poems deal with life as it is, and others with life as it ought to be.

"Pocapella's Warning" is a true story. It was related to me by the Indian agent who warned Pocapella that the Blackfeet would steal his squaws and ponies if he would go to the mountain on a hunting expedition. The poem shows the truth of the old adage, "They who will not be counselled cannot be saved."

"A Chinese Tale" was partly founded on fact. It was written to make clear the fact that an All-Wise Judge will never change his judgment.

"A Southern Romance" has a useful moral for the white as well as for the colored, and was not written as a "slam" at the colored race. The poem on "The Dual Life" was intended for the white more than the colored race.

EDWARD THOMAS FAY,
Harris, Kansas.

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JAN 3 1914

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POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

A CHEERFUL FACE

There is something in a cheerful face
That is music and balm and song;
That scatters sunshine wherever it goes
As it moves through the world along.

A cheerful face is a banquet spread;
It is hope and joy and rest.
Of all good things we may possess,
A cheerful face is the best.

Go on your way with a cheerful smile,
And harbor no gloom within.
This world has no use for a gloomy face;
It's a burden that weighs like sin.

A smile is the open sesame still,
With magic power as of old;
It unlocks the store of human love
That is proof to the key of gold.

A smile will sweeten life's bitterest cup.
How we love our cheerful friend
Who points the future with rosy tints,
And has rainbow hues to lend.

Smiles brighten the pathway of our lives;
They give us the chord and the key
To attune our souls to the music that
Rings through eternity.

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

WHEN THE LEAVES COME TUMBLING DOWN

Down in the forest solitude
Is where we like to go,
When yellow leaves begin to fall,
When autumn breezes blow.
For one feels sort of lonesome
About the quiet town,
And hies away to woodland scenes
When the leaves come tumbling down.
The clouds in strange processions
Sweep across the sky;
The forest flecked with sun and shade
Is pleasing to the eye.
The sunbeams chase the shadows
O'er forest, field and town;
Old nature plays a lively game
When the leaves come tumbling down.
Down in the forest solitude
There is perfume in the air.
One might imagine seraphim
Had swung their censers there.
But do not look for seraphim—
Just keep spying round,
And you'll see the pawpaw's censers swing
When the leaves come tumbling down.
If they had been forbidden fruit
That luckless Adam ate,
I think forgiveness would have come
To Adam and his mate.

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

I really think Jehovah
In anger would not frown
If he had caught them eating pawpaws
When the leaves come tumbling down.

There is no fruit more tempting
That is known to mortal man
Than a ripe delicious pawpaw.
Deny the fact, who can?

He says "Old friend I'll treat you,"
When he is lying on the ground,
And he seems to rise and meet you
When the leaves come tumbling down.

PEACE

Along the crowded road of life
How noiselessly some tread.
They journey on, avoiding strife;
In peace they win their bread.
In peace life's phantom's they pursue;
As they are doing all should do.

The history of our warring race
Shows that the men of peace
Have occupied the highest place.
Long may their kind increase.
Their calm ideals are the best;
In peace humanity should rest;

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

Should cease from needless war and strife—
Should rise from darkness of the past
Into the light of higher life,
To be a peaceful race at last—
A race whose hands will not be red,
But will bear the olive branch instead.

WHISKEY DID IT ALL

When they who loose the scourges,
Their vials of wrath outpour,
Than rum, the arch destroyer,
None ever ruined more.

With grim resolve, men oft have dared
To face the cannon's ~~mouth~~; *breath*
To drive less evils from their homes
They did not shrink from death.

The woe and ruin rum has caused
No tongue can truly tell.
It has brought men to the scaffold
And to the prison cell.

And countless thousands have been slain
And fortunes have been sunk
By men devoid of reason
When they were beastly drunk.

Rum is a fell destroyer—
Humanity's worst foe.
It ruins hopes and ruins homes
And lays bright prospects low.

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

There are thousands of good fellows
Who now are on the bum
Can lay the failure of their lives
To nothing else but rum.

One who committed suicide,
This was his last sad call:
"Go tell the boys to drink no more—
That whiskey did it all."

FOR LOVE OF HOME

The greatest sacrifice of men
Is that which soldiers give:
That others by their noble deaths
In happiness may live.

The story of the world is full
Of heroisms grand;
Of gallant deeds performed by men
Who loved their native land.

What nerved the immortal three hundred
With their living bodies to bar
The Persians' march on Sparta
In the direful Grecian war?

What upheld the heaven-given banner
Under which great Constantine,
Who, with his gallant soldiers,
Stayed the flood of Rome's decline?

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

What bore in wondrous triumph
From the Ganges to the Tweed,
The glittering square of crimson silk,
With eagles, in the lead?

What was it fired the patriots' souls
Who fought at Bunker Hill?
What bore our flag through many a fray
And stands behind it still?

It is a sentiment, my friends
As old as is gray time,
And broader than the surging seas --
It rules in every clime.

It dwells in every human heart;
It lives in every zone.
It is the love of native land,
Because it holds our home.

REMEMBRANCE

Sometimes we meet our long-lost friends
And talk of bygone days;
Of old companions of our youth,
And all about their ways;

Of some who fell before the sweep
Of Time's remorseless blade,
And those who journey with us still
Toward the realm of shade.

We tell about the lives they led,
The deeds that they have done;

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

Of bright dreams that have faded
Or victories they have won;
How some fought life's battle bravely,
Returning blow for blow,
While some threw down their arms and fled,
Who feared to face the foe.
And some of them we have to praise,
And some of them we blame,
Just as they led a proper life
Or gloried in their shame.
How like a careful mariner
While sailing o'er life's sea.
Some use a compass and a chart
And far from danger flee;
While others 'blindly steer their craft
On charted rock or shoal,
And end the voyage of their lives
Far from the hoped-for goal.

TWO CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS

Two Christian soldiers o'er the sands
Before the angry Arabs fly.
They saw the steel flash in their hands;
They heard them shout "The dogs must die!"
Their chargers skimmed the desert sand
Like swallows through the evening sky;
But swiftly rode that dark-faced band
Of angry Arabs following nigh.

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

It was a hard-contested race
For life on that dry desert place.

But now the palm groves rise in view.
Soon will the Christians' camp be near.
"Will Jesus save us?" mused the two
Who rode in hope and fear.
But nearer flashed the gleaming steel
And louder rose the yell:
"We will strike them down for Allah's weal
Those infidels of hell!"
What power on earth could save them then
If captured by those wrathful men?

But lo, one Christian's horse fell dead;
His rider tumbled on the plain.
He was hurt—he scarce could raise his head.
His comrade heard his cry of pain.
He swiftly reined his charged in—
Leaped from the saddle with a bound,
And in an instant was with him,
His prostate comrade, on the ground.
"You shall not die alone," he said.
"Their gleaming steel I do not dread."

The Arab chieftain saw the deed.
Such deed he had never seen before.
He drew his rein and stayed his steed,
And thirsted for their blood no more.
"Hear me," he said; "though wars have been
Since time unknown till I grew old,
No nobler deed was ever seen;
No heart so tried, so true and bold.
If such are sons of Christ," said he,
"Long may they live in liberty!"

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

A CHINESE TALE

A merry wag, on mischief bent,
Straight to a Chinese garden went.
He was a good ventriloquist,
Who chance for sport had seldom missed.
He said, "Today I'll have some fun.
And make the wily heathen run."

Before a washee-shop he saw
A washee man with hungry maw,
Who bore a salmon in his hand,
And quick as thought the joke was planned.
The salmon said, in haughty tone,
"Quong Lee, to me all things are known."

"If you eat me," the salmon said,
"Before two hours you will be dead,
And be reincarnated in a mule
That the opposing tongue will rule."
Quong Lee, with terror in his eyes,
Gazed at the fish in dumb surprise.

'Twas more than he could understand;
The fish fell from his trembling hand.
His queue rose like a paper kite,
And soared above him in his fright,
He staggered like a drunken man,
Then gathered all his strength and ran.

Into the joss house quick he sped,
His queue still soaring o'er his head.
All nature's laws it did disdain,
And floated like an aeroplane.

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

Safe in the joss house on the hill,
He sought to win Budha's good will.
The wag close followed in his wake,
And with him did the salmon take.
He laid the salmon on the floor,
And hid behind the pondrous door
While Quong Lee poured his tale of fear
In mighty Budha's wooden ear,
While Budha's priest was standing near.

"Give me ten plunks," the old priest said,
"And I will push your case ahead.
In Budha's court my prayers ne'er fail;
With Budha always I prevail"
The frightened Lee the ten plunks paid
Unto the man in robes arrayed.

Then Budha said, "That priest's a knave;
His prayers can neither damn nor save.
Great Budha's justice changes not
And purchased prayers are useless rot.
All things I know, I hear, I see,
And final judgment rests with me.

No cunning priest with all his skill
Can change the justice of my will."
The frightened priest stood trembling then,
As old Wing Boo came tottering in,
Great Budha's favor to implore,
As he had often done before.

Wing, in his time, was always kind
To help the poor and sick and blind;
And now himself was sick and poor,
And many hardships did endure.

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

The wag the old man's need well knew,
And Budha spoke for good Wing Boo.

"Hi po ponya," * Budha cried;
"Wing Boo, you are my love and pride.

You always had a ready oar
To help the drowning to the shore.
Forever, with the tranquil blest,
In Budha's heaven shall be your rest.
Take home the fish from off this floor,
And heaven will send you many more."

Then to the priest Sky Bang he said,
"See that my hungry shall be fed,
Give a hundred plunks to old Wing Boo,
Or I will make a mule of you."

The frightened priest the money paid,
And Budha's anger was allayed.

Wing Boo then tottered home content
That Budha's aid to him had sent.
The cunning wag the fact well knew
That men great Budha's work can do;
That temples oft are dens of thieves
Whose high priests steal by make-believes.

* Hi po ponya is "Hello, good friend," in Chinese.

LIFE

Life is like the game of horseshoes—
There is something at which we aim;
And good or bad partners we may choose
To help us win the game;

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

And human hopes will rise and sink
Like the horseshoes rise and fall.
When the bitter or sweet from life's cup we drink,
There is bitter and sweet for all.

Horseshoes is surely a game of skill,
But chance sometimes steps in
And changes the game, as oft it will,
And the poorest players win.
Sometimes our "ringers" get knocked out,
When we feel dead sure they will stay;
In all, the affairs of life, no doubt,
Chance acts in the selfsame way.

Events sometimes rush out of the dark
That shape the fates of men;
We may aim with care and miss life's mark
Or a random shot may win.
Some are "leaners" in the game of life,
And some are "skunked" outright.
Perhaps the "failers" are not to blame
If we but judged them right.

ROLIO AND BOLIO

Like drift wood on the sea of life
They drifted to our shore.
They drifted outward with the tide;
We will see them never more.

They came from Kansas City,
Beside the brown Missou,

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

And abode awhile in Harris,
Where they found some work to do.

They drifted into town one day—
Unheralded they came—
And to make a stake for winter time
They played the shovel game.

Their iron shovels glistened
In the moon's pale light,
Where the iron horses slumbered
On their iron beds at night.

Said Rolio to Bolio,
"This work is far too hard."
Said Bolio to Rolio,
"It's right you are, old pard."

Said Rolio to Bolio, "This town
Is far too dry,"
Said Bolio to Rolio,
"For the wet realms I sigh."

Said Rolio to Bolio,
"This town is far too small."
Said Bolio to Rolio,
"There is no free lunch at all."

Said Rolio to Bolio,
"I spurn their proffered gold.
I know of better business,
Where it's not so horrid cold."

"And furthmore," said Rolio,
"I know a thing or two:
It's me for Kansas City,
In the kingdom of Missou."

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

Said Rolio to Bolio,
"Alas, old pard, good-bye;
And should we never meet on earth,
I'll meet you in the sky."

Said Bolio to Rolio,
"No future life I fear.
Old Nick could not inflict a worse
Than I've experienced here.
"And should we meet on earth again,
Old Solomon we'll heed.
We'll eat, drink and be merry,
And smoke the Indian weed."

Said Rolio to Bolio,
"I'm going up the grade,
An if we never meet again,
This parting was well made."

KANSAS

Kansas, our home land,
How strange is thy story
Like Minerva, full-armed,
Into being you sprung.
Thy valor and justice
Have crowned Thee with glory,
And a halo of splendor
Around Thee has hung.

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

The sword and the balance
 Were left to thy keeping;
The spirit of justice
 Awoke at thy call,
And millions arose
 From their bondage and weeping
To swell the glad anthem:
 There is freedom for all.

Kansas—our Kansas—
 Thou leadest the nation;
Thy wisdom endureth,
 Thy justice enthralls
Adversaries drank of thy pure inspiration
 Till they offered the tribute
Of love in thy halls.

O what a bright, laughing
 Fountain of treasure
Flows from thy bounteous soil.
 Year after year,
Bountiful giver of wealth beyond measure,
 Yet 'tis for thy virtues
We hold thee most dear.

In thy romance, love, valor
 And duty are blended;
Tragedy darkened,
 The hour of thy dawn.
They recked not of danger,
 The sons who defended;
They shall live in thy story
 While time journeys on.

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

No more the plumed Sioux
Rushes fiercely to plunder;
His bow has been broken,
His valor was vain;
And the bison, whose hoof-beats
Re-echoed like thunder,
Have passed like a dream
From the green, sunny plain.
The white man has come
With his burden and scheming,
With restless ambition
That scorns every chain.
He has found sunny Kansas,
The land of his dreaming,
An Eden with verdure
And sunshine and rain.

BRIGHT THINGS

The brightest thing that nature made
From heaven and earth will soonest fade.
The rainbow made of seven-hued light,
The dew drop like a jewel bright.
The lightning's flash, the meteors' gleam
Will vanish like our sweetest dream.
There are bright things that never die —
Fond memories of the days gone by.
The love that was so pure and true,
Bright as the rainbow's glorious hue;

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

The memories of deeds well done
Glow with the splendor of the sun,
Nor time nor evil's power can doom
Bright joys that in the soul found room.
A life well spent, year after year,
Has joys that never disappear.
Where honor, peace and virtue dwell
All things are bright and all is well.

PATERNAL ADVICE

I have advice to give you, son,
Before I sail away,
But where my bark will anchor
Is more than I can say.
I've heard there is a goodly port
Upon the other side,
And hope that into it, some day,
My bark will safely glide.
I've trod the path of rectitude;
I want you to do the same;
And never be a crooked man,
Who plays a crooked game,
And never let your mind become
A dark, forbidding den,
Where evil thoughts, like serpents,
Will coil their folds therein.
Beware of evil habits,
And never give them reigns;

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

Though weak as cobwebs they begin,
They will bind you soon like chains.
You may struggle like a victim
Crushed in a python's fold;
As small your chances to escape
From habits strong and old.

The way of evil doers
Is a way of grief and shame;
Beset by slings and arrows,
Their life is a worthless game.
Their evil deeds pursue them
With swift, untiring tread,
And sit upon their coffin lids
At last, when they are dead.

He may be the village villain
Or wear a crown of gold,
And slay a hundred thousand men,
Like conquerers of old.
The hopes they base on evil deeds
Will vanish into naught;
False, luring hopes, like mirage lakes,
That thirsty travelers sought.

MISER AND THIEF

A long time ago,
In the years that have flown,
There was a rich miser
Who lived all alone.

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

He toiled all the day
And he scarce slept by night,
And to add to his store
Was his only delight.

There was also a robber—
A wily old knave—
Who lived all in solitude
Safe in a cave.
This robber was treacherous,
Vicious and bold,
And schemed how to steal
The rich miser's red gold.

He dressed himself up
In the garments he stole
From a pious old monk,
And assumed the monk's role.
Then he sought the old miser,
With tears in his eyes,
And told him a batch
Of tremendous lies.

"Thank heaven!" said the old thief,
"I've come here to you
To pray for your soul
And tell what you must do.
You must give of the gold
You have hoarded away
To the halt and the lame
And the blind while you may:

"For if you do not,
You will go down below,
Where the fires tormenting

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

Are always aglow;
Where the devils are torturing
Old misers' souls
And heaping around them
The red, flaming coals;
Where, forever and ever,
Their spirit will burn,
In the reigon from whence
There is no hope of return.
This miser all beggars
Did hate and despise,
And he planted his fist
Right betwixt his two eyes.
The miser was tough,
And the thief he was strong.
They battled like wild cats—
The fight lasted long;
And when it was ended,
Both of them lay dead,
And they needed not money,
But coffins, instead.
A wandering tramp found them
Steeped in their gore.
He took all their money,
And wished they had more,
And the earth circled on
Round the sun as before.

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

THE CALL OF KANSAS

I have climbed California's mountains,
And, from their summits high,
Gazed at the distant mountain peaks,
And where the lowlands lie.

I have gazed down upon the valleys
On many a pleasing scene,
Where the lime and lemon groweth
And the groves are always green.

I have watched the ocean billows
Break with thunder on the shore,
And caught the inspiration
Of the music in their roar;

But the old familiar Kansas scenes
Still held more charms for me
Than the mountains' massive grandeur
Or the thunder of the sea.

The beauties of the fairest scene
The heart will coldly spurn,
And like the homing pigeon,
To the old scenes ever turn.

And the old familiar voices
Will ever call away
From where the green-robed mountains rise
Or where the billows play.

Where the old familiar faces are
That give to life a zest,

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

There the dream of life is sweetest
And life is at its best.

CIRCUMSTANCE

My name is Circumstance, and I
Still hold the reins on you.
In boundless space I work, I fly,
I have so much to do.
This busy world, in all its zones,
My never-ceasing power owns.
Ten thousand thousand years ago,
Still was I fresh and young,
And bright new worlds, with fiery glow,
That in their orbits swung,
Obeyed me then, as still they do,
In all the boundless field of blue.
Each individual who exists—
Yes, ev'ry living sesnate thing
That in its kind on earth persists—
Proclaims that I am king.
I still produce, preserve, destroy,
And fill the world with grief or joy;
And e'en the tide in men's affairs,
Well taken at the gate
That bears them up Success's stairs,
Where for them triumphs wait—
All is the work of Circumstance,
Whose law and scepter sways all chance.

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

POCAPELLA'S WARNING

"Stay, Pocapella!" the agent cried,
As he pointed to the high divide.
"In the hills the murderous Blackfeet ride
Who scorn all laws.
They will steal your ponies and steal your squaws,
As they have done with the braves who tried
To hunt for game on the mountain side.
Keep far away from the Blackfeet's claws."

But Pocapella, with eagle eye,
Gazed far away through Montana's sky
To where the mountains towered high,
And he said, "I go
To hunt in the hills, and I fear no foe;
When my rifle speaks, the bear will die,
And Blackfeet before me will fall or fly,
And I'll pitch my tent where the pinunes grow."

With squaws and ponies and sabre bright,
And his rifle reflecting the morning light,
Pocapella passed out of sight
A splendid specimen of his race,
With eagle feathers in his hair,
And war paint on his coppery face
He cared not for problems of wrong or right,
And he scorned the Blackfeet and loved to fight,
And there was no danger he would not dare.

But, alas for Pocapella and all
Who heed not warning voices that call
When clouds of danger hang like a pall,
That keener visions than theirs can see.

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

He pitched his tent where the pine trees grow,
And he hunted on peaks that were clad with snow.
But the Blackfeet were out on a jamboree,
And they stole his squaws and ponies and all,
And never again his squaws did he see.

Pocapella stood all alone
On a mountain peak on a granite stone,
And he knew what grief there is to be known
In this good old, bad old, world of ours,
That for some has sunshine and song and flowers,
While others' hopes are overthrown
By the working of fate's mysterious powers;
And he mused on friends and foes that had flown
Over the hills to a place unknown.

Footsore and weary, at last he came.
He had neither squaws or ponies or game.
He had never a word of praise or blame.
"What did you ride home on?" the agent said.
He spoke not, but pointed at the saber instead,
And he called for a ration of bread and meat,
He had gambled and lost, but he didn't feel beat.
There were plenty of other squaws to wed,
And ponies to steal from the wild Blackfeet.

THE MASTER'S DREAM

"Put up the sword," the master cried.
He healed the wound the sword had made.
The right to use it he denied,
And for a peaceful world he prayed.

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

Lo, peace on earth, good will to men—
This was the Master's earnest thought.
'Twill glorify his memory when
All ravening tyrants are forgot.
A tranquil world is what we need,
But war still rages as of old.
The Master's word men little heed,
And draw the sword for power and gold.
Sometime may dawn a golden age;
Sometime the Master's dream come true,
When men will learn to curb their rage,
And all find useful work to do.

SPRING

Sand cranes are circling in the sky,
And dragon-tongues are in bloom,
And noisy herons are soaring high,
Where there is plenty of room.
We know the winter is laid to rest
When the sand crane's cries we hear;
When Orion marches down the West,
With his great dog ever near.
'Tis the time when resurrection has come
To many a plant and flower,
And old friends shout who had been dumb
Through many a wintry hour.
The orchards are dressed in white and pink,
And the landscape is tinged with green,

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

And the sand cranes circle around, I think,
Just to gaze once more on the scene.
The blackbird choir, ten thousand strong,
Are singing in the trees;
Our souls are thrilled by their matchless song
That floats away on the breeze.
From out of the depths the wild geese call
To their mates as they hurry by,
And the answering honk of each and all
Rings clear in the deep blue sky.
There is a mantle of white on the old plum trees
And the lilac is in bloom;
From the sunny South every balmy breeze
Is laden with perfume.
We know that winter is laid to rest
And rejoice that spring is here,
When Orion marches down the West
With his great dog ever near.

YOU ARE DOGGONE TOOTIN'

You are doggone tootin',
This world is a bully place
For a jolly, big-souled fellow
With sunshine in his face.
We feel his soul's contagion
When we shake his friendly hand,
And we'd rather hear his jolly jokes
Than listen to a band.

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

The sunshine of his happy soul
Dispels the gloom around,
And you hear the people laughing
Wherever he is found.

It seems your cup of happiness
He always tries to fill,
And when he lends a helping hand,
He does it with good will.

He never makes a harbor
Of his mind for gloom and spite,
And every one who knows him
Will tell you he's all right.

It's a pity such good fellows
Should ever have to die.
But wouldn't a heaven look lonesome
Without him, by and by?

You are doggone tootin'
We'd like to meet him where
There are no cranks and crookedness,
Or grief or gloom or care.

HAD A RIGHT TO

The radiant sun was sinking,
The day was almost done;
It was a pleasant evening
And a glorious golden sun.

The fields and trees were verdant,
The sky above serene;

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

The sinking sun that evening
Shone brightly on the scene,
And poured its peerless splendor
On many a stately pine
That towered above the path where
I roved with lady mine.
'Twas hand in hand and happy
We walked the pleasant way,
And caught the inspiration
Of that eventide in May.
Her calm eyes, full of splendor,
Were ^{members} members of her soul;
Bright orbs where love and wisdom
Showed passionate control.
I queried if she loved me.
She whispered in my ear
The richest sweetest answer
That mortal man can hear.
I kissed her. Do not wonder
At this incident of life?
In fact, I had a right to,
Because she was my wife.

THE DOUBLE LIFE

See you yon vulture soaring high?
How smooth he sails through yonder sky;
And, judging by his glorious flight,
One well might think his life was right;

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

But when we see his pinions sink,
And watch him dine amidst the stink,
We envy not his glorious flight
Amidst the azure fields of light.
Alas for human frailty, we
The vulture type too often see.
Recording angel well might weep—
They soar so high and sink so deep.
Worse frailties in the human kind
Than in the vultures we can find.
Those whited sepulchres who lead
A double life on carrion feed—
How we would scorn them if we knew
The worse than vulture deeds they do.
From morn till night, from night till morn,
The pure all vulture feasts will scorn,
And in their flight for higher things
Will fail not like the vultures' wings.

THE BRIDGE OF ELSIRAT—MOHAMED'S BELIEF

The young and the old and the weak and the strong
To the bridge of Elsirat all journey along:
The rich and the poor and the good and the bad,
All who are happy and all who are sad.
The proud and the humble all go the same way
To the bridge of Elsirat, and no man can stay.
The wise and the foolish come to it at last,
Each bearing his record from out of the past.

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

'Tis a wonderful structure that Allah has made,
And the wicked to tread on this bridge are afraid.
The bridge of Elsirat will hold up no sin,
And the wicked fall through to a sulphurous den,
Where, forever and ever, their torments increase,
Without any hope of respite or release.
While they who are sinless pass over secure
To where Elysian pleasures forever endure.
The commandments of Allah the foolish despise,
But none may pass over his bridge but the wise.

IF HE HAD HIS WAY

A cloud of whiskers and tangled hair
And garments in need of much repair,
With old slouch hat and his ill-clad wife,
And many children, he goes through life.
He has no money to bale like hay,
But I know he would if he had his way.
If he had his way, he would be rich and grand;
His mansion the finest in the land;
Silk and satin his wife would wear,
And diamonds would glow in her golden hair.
He would have a yacht and a palace car,
And in quest of pleasure would travel far.
If he had his way, he would have fame,
And men would never forget his name;
The fountain of youth he would seek and find,
And the ills of life he would leave behind.
What shipwrecked hopes there may be found
Under an old slouch hat as it moves around.

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

WESTWARD-BOUND

Ten thousand voices mingle
To swell the glad refrain.
We are bound for western Kansas,
For the tide has turned again.
We are bound for western Kansas,
Where the billowy wheat fields grow,
For nature in her happiest mood
Has gently whispered "Go!"
But nature's moods are changeful,
Just like the moods of men.
She smiles on western Kansas
And lures the grangers in.
But the yellow wind from Texas,
That rips the sunny plain
And buries wheat fields out of sight,
Drive people out again.
But some of sterner nature
Will hold the fort and stay,
Despite the roasting winds that blast
The corn fields in a day.
By men of sternest metal
All victories are won,
Through fire or flood or field of blood
Their watchword is "Press On!"
I have watched the prairie schooners
Sail slowly out of sight,
Which bore some restless heroes,
Brave as Lamancha's knight,
And wondered what the future

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

Of those pioneers would be
Who raise their standard in the West
And fight for victory.

IN REDLANDS, CALIFORNIA

In the beautiful city of Redlands
A strange population there dwells.
There are millionaires living in splendor
And hobos who march with the bells † —
Those lovers of freedom and leisure,
The hobos who march with the bells.
They come from all parts of creation,
Lead on to this haven of rest;
By some mystical strange inspiration
That seizes their brain and their breast,
And hurries them onward to Redlands.
Their mecca, their hope in the West —
Their dreamland, their haven, their rest.
And when they are safe in its harbor,
They cast all life's burdens aside;
They sing, they dance and they charla,*
On the crest of good fortune they ride.
In the land of the big yellow orange
Their fortune has reached its high tide --
On the sunny slope reached its high tide.
But, like wandering comets, they vanish;
Their sojourn soon comes to an end,

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

And you hear "Adiose combinaro!"†
When to go somewhere else they intend;
And they take up life's bells and its burdens,
And hasten away with the wind—
And their course, it will change with the wind.

† Bells are tin cans.

* Charla, Mexican for chat.

† "Adiose combinaro," Good-bye, partner.

A CHEERFUL LIAR

Say, do you know Bill Braggart?
Bill is a cheerful liar.
He walked right up Vesuvius
When it was belching fire.
He dives in deadly whirlpools
On the corner of the street.
And he scales the fiery mountain
Where the happy loafers meet.
And while the sun is sinking,
Slowly sinking in the west,
The loafers gather 'round to hear
His biggest and his best.
He will beg a chew of tobacco,
Then trouble will begin.
He whipped a heavy-weight champion
Before you could count ten.
Or he'd fought a tribe of Indians,
And put them all to flight;
He had sneaked into the enemy's camp
And spiked their guns at night.

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

He tells of winning victories,
But never of defeat.
He never lost a battle —
On the corner of the street.

He had crossed a raging river
When it was ten miles wide.
He rowed across it in a tub,
Safe to the other side.

'Twas one dark night he was scouting
For the grizzly grenadiers;
He paddled back in safety
And received a round of cheers.

From a cloud he saw the lightning dart
Straight at a little child.
Unconscious of the rushing bolt,
The little fellow smiled.
Bill quickly ran across the street,
Just as a brave man should,
And snatched the child to safety
Ere the bolt struck where he'd stood.

When he traveled with a circus,
He said he had a knack
Of turning double summersaults
With an anvil on his back.
He had won ten thousand dollars
On a foot race, long ago,
But a cyclone took his pocket book,
And now his funds are low.

He had smoked in a powder-mill,
Though it was against the rules.
He thought that powder-makers
Were a timid lot of fools.

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

His cigar fell on the powder
And burned a bushel or two,
And before he tramped the fire out,
His boots were burned clean through.
When his wife comes charging down the street,
With fire in her eyes,
To retreat around the corner
Bill always deems it wise.
I think you know Billy Braggart.
He is living in your town.
He don't care when the sun gets up
Or when the sun goes down.

DON'T WORRY

Let us not grieve at fortune's frown;
Let us not waste our time with sighs.
When the Western stars go down,
Other stars will brightly rise.
When affairs with us go wrong,
What's the use to grieve and pine?
Dark clouds seldom linger long.
When they pass, the sun will shine.
From the cradle to the grave
There are trials, ups and downs.
Life is a battle, where the brave
Win the laurels and the crowns.
There is work for each and all.
Let us do it with a will.

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

From the heights strong voices call.
Do not fear to climb the hill.
On through trials to the stars.
Doubt and worry cast aside.
With the courage of a Mars,
Forward to the battle ride.

THE CONTEST

The contest goes on as of ages of old
For love and for glory, for pleasure and gold.
The contest goes on, and hard battles are fought,
And the victories often too dearly are bought.
Strange dramas are played while the old planet spins,
And the world still hurrahs for the fellow that wins.
Of the fellow who loses the world will lose sight,
Though he gave his best effort to win the good fight.
Some capture the objects they earnestly chase,
While other are left far behind in the race.
Some follow a standard that is stainless and bright,
And swerve not their course to the left or the right.
They save their honor, will sacrifice all,
And follow serenely where duty will call.
All heroes are not found in battle's grim strife,
But some quietly walk in the byways of life.
To their fame and their glory no trumpet may sound,
Yet they make the world better wherever they're found.

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

A BIG BLACK EYE

Before you lie about him
Or hit him in the face,
Just think if you were standing
In the other fellow's place,
How you'd like to bear the burden
Of your own disgusting lie,
Or walk around the village
With a big black eye.
There is not much glory in it
To be agile with your first,
And you will fall from honor's standard
When the honest truth you twist.
There are so many twisters
To make a fellow sigh,
To know they are giving honest truth
A big black eye.
We like an honest, manly man
Whose birthrights are unsold;
Who scorns to sell his honor
For ease or power or gold.
This world needs legions like him—
You know the reason why:
They will give to shams and falsehood
A big black eye.

BACK TO HARRIS

They hasten back to Harris

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

From regions east and west;
Until they're found within its bounds,
Their souls can never rest.

They all come back to Harris
From regions far and near.
A happy lot that murmur not,
You'll find them gathered here.

They are wafted home by every breeze
From fairest foreign lands,
From sunny isles in Southern seas,
From Klondike's golden sands.

From where the stateliest palm groves rise,
From mountains like jungfru,
From regions with Italian skies,
And flowery kingdoms, too.

They dream about the good old town,
The woods, the rippling rills,
And where the golden sun goes down
Beneath the Oread hills.

They know that skies are brightest,
That fields are greenest here;
Time's footfalls here are lightest,
And celestial joys are near.

Kenoma's crystal waves are near,
And whales are captured every spring.
There Ryhard shines among his lines,
And every care takes wing.

The quiet, happy Harris life,
It has more joys by far
I am pleased to tell than ere befell
A war lord or a czar.

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

A FABLE WITH A MORAL

On Hog-eyed Johnston's melon patch
The pale moon shone,
When hungry Honydaz arrived,
On foot and all alone.

He slashed the ripest melon
With his long, keen blade.
It ripped before his gleaming steel
As to himself he said:

"I's gwine to eat this mountatn sweet—
One mountain sweet alone."

The fact to Hog-eyed Johnntson
It never will be known

When he ate that mountain sweet,
His good resolve had fled,
And if he had a conscience then,
Its still small voice was dead.

His honesty was shipwrecked
And cast upon the shore,
And he wished he had a sack to hold
A half a dozen more.

He said "I's sholy got no sack,
But this is what I'll do:
I's gwine to use my oberalls
And fill them with a few."

It was no sooner said than done.
The oberalls were filled.
In melon-swiping trickery
This Honydaz was skilled.

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

On Honydaz's tater patch
There was a midnight raid,
And Hog-eyed Johnston, he was there,
Quite active with a spade.

This haughty Southern gentleman
Did high-grade morals lack,
And 'twas a strange coincidence—
He, too, forgot his sack.

But he, like neighbor Honydaz,
In shady deals was skilled,
And his oberall with taters
To their summit soon was filled.

With the loot astride their shoulders,
Each started for his home,
But they had to cross the cronfield,
Where the headless spook did roam.

They were powerful superstitious
'Bout the spirit of the dead,
And each mistook the other
For the spook who had no head.

They tore the earth up in their flight—
Each ran his level best,
And left the only overalls
That either one possessed.

And when their fright subsided,
It was some time nearly morn.
Each found the other's overalls
Lost in the field of corn.

And hog-eyed Johnston said, says he,
"Dem taters that I stole

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

Have been dun changed to melins
By that spook—Lord bress my soul!"

And Honydaz nigh fainted
Beside his cabin door
When he untied the oberalls
And taters did outpour.

Hog-eyed Johnson was short and fat,
And Honydaz was tall,
When they tried on the oberalls,
It did their souls appal.

In the oberalls were letters
That shed a flood of light
Upon the kind of husky spooks
That hustled after night.

They were amorous espistles
From the belle of Murkeyville
That told each of those suitors,
"Sh'o, marry you I will."

When Honydaz had dug one up,
With bulging eyes he read:
"Dear Hog-eyed Johnston,
Light o' my life, de only man I'd wed."

And Honydaz's countenance fell,
And then his anger rose.
When he pursued the letter through
He found in Johnston's clothes.

When Hog-eyed Johnston read one through,
He rose into the air,
His head went through his cabin roof
And smashed the clabboards there

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

They met on the field of honor
At sunrise on that morn,
While searching for their overalls
Lost in the field of corn.

When Hog-eyed Johnston's charging cheer
Rang over Murkeytown,
The colored guard came mustering fast
To put the riot down.

And when the row was ended,
And the doctor set their bones,
They had paid for their dishonesty
With blood and grief and groans.

MORAL

Oft retributive justice falls
In unexpected ways
And in unexpected places
On the villians in life's plays.

AN IRISH FAIRY TALE

All the fairies of the island,
With their gorgeous king and queen,
Were at midnight gayly dancing
In a circle on the green.

Many a fairy knight in armour,
Many a witching fairy lass,
Gayly tripped the light fantastic
In a circle on the grass.

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

Thirteen, fifteen, fourteen

Were the magic words they said,
While their gaudy trappings glittered,
And the moon shone overhead.

And a proud man and a hunchback
Gazed upon the mystic scene;
Heard their mystic chant while dancing
Gayly 'round their king and queen.

Long they gazed at them in silence,
But at last the hunchback said:
"Thirteen, sixteen, fifteen, fourteen,"
While the happy dancers sped.

And a shout of approbation
Rose from all that fairy throng,
"Thirteen, sixteen, fifteen, fourteen,"
Rang in accents loud and long.

Then they took the little hunchback.
And while fairy bands did play,
With their painless knives and scissors,
Cut his ugly hump away.

And the proud man gazed in wonder,
And unto himself said he:
"If I'll add seventeen to the chorus,
They'll do something grand for me."

But no sooner had he said it
Than a shout of anger rose:
"Who has spoiled our incantation?"
And they felled them with their blows.

Quick they seized the proud offender,
And they bound him to a rack,

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

And the hunchback's hump forever
Firmly fixed upon his back.

Now the moral to this story
Is, Leave well enough alone,
Or perchance we'll meet some evil
That will make our spirits groan.

MUSKOGEE RED'S HOROSCOPE: A DREAM

I dreamed that I was dreaming
Of astrologers of old
Who read from out the book of fate
And strange events foretold.

They had spent many sleepless nights
In watching overhead,
A strange erratic comet
With a tail of fiery red.

They said, "We do prognosticate
There will be a red-haired man,
Who'll be a restless, roving sport,
Somewhat like Jenghis' khan;

"Somewhat like Alexander,
Who drank too deep of wine."

They cast his horoscope with care,
And did the business fine.

They said "We do prognosticate
(Now, reader, do not scoff)
He will stay a while to make a stake,
And then he will hike off."

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

And while I gazed upon them,
In unison they said,
"The name he will be known by
Will be Muskogee Red."

The comet crossed a string of stars
As crooked as could be.
They said Muskogee Red would cross
The crooked K., N. & D.

Past Aquarius, the comet,
Rushed on with double speed;
The astrologers at once sat up,
And of this fact took heed.

They said this indicated,
And it was plain to see,
Muskogee Red and water
Would never well agree.

In passing Mars, the comet moved
So near and very slow,
The astrologers said Muskogee Red
Would never fear a foe.

By Virgo next the comet rushed
With more than lightning speed.
That he would have no love affairs,
On this they all agreed.

The astrologers then vanished,
And other scenes begun;
I saw the real Muskogee Red
March toward the setting sun.

I followed him where landscapes rose;
I followed where they fell;

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

I traced him o'er the mountain top;
I chased him through the dell.

Through village or through city street.
Where'er his pathway led,
I followed, and the cry arose,
"There goes Muskogee Red!"

Friends grasp Muskogee by the hand,
And said, "Come stay a while,"
His contenance then wore a bland
And radiant, heavenly smile.

He said, with accent soft and low,
"This desert is far too dry."
He turned his prow toward the west,
And bade them all good-bye.

In spirit still I followed him
Unto our western shore,
He stood beside the Golden Gate,
To hear old ocean roar.

Somewhere on heathen Kearney street
A Mongol with shaved head
Cried, "Hoopela! Me have a time,
Same as Muskogee Red!"

From Golden Gate to Golden State,
He turned him to the south,
In a land of wine, you may divine,
There was no cause for drouth.

Through San Fernando tunnel
He passed in darkest night,
And marched upon Los Angeles
And took the town all right.

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

Of all the sports I ever met,
Some living now, some dead,
I never met a gayer soul
Than old Muskogee Red.

CHOOSE A CLEAN FRIEND

Vile, base boozing,
And licentious, too—
Is this the thing
The Lord, God, made for you?
Is this the choosing
Of a Godlike mind?
Can you no purer friendship
Seek and find?
A destroyer of virtue,
Disgusting, low and base—
Can a pure soul
Such rottenness embrace?
All they who tread
The downward path of shame,
Their records burn them
Like a quenchless flame.
On earth, vile outcasts,
Their's the lowest place;
Their sad lives spent
In torture and disgrace.

POEMS BY EDWARD THOMAS FAY

The pure will seek
For friendship pure and clean,
And spurn the reprobate
Low, base and mean.
And heaven will bless
Their efforts in the end
To find their souls' desire —
A noble friend.

POEMS BY JOHN FAY

LIFE'S MARCH

Marching, marching, ceaseless marching,
Marching early, marching late,
To the river Leathe forever,
At a sure and rapid rate.
Hasting home the poor and friendless;
Hasting home the rich and great.
Still omniverous time is watching;
He will have us for his prey;
He is whittling, whittling, whittling,
With a steady hand each day,
At the plank on which we're drifting,
Till it's whittled all away.
And it seems time, unrelenting,
Glories in life's tempest rage,
Loves to crush the brightest flower,
Loves to soil the whitest page;
Glories in the wreck of manhood,
Glories in the fall of age.

SHAKSPEARE

Great king of thought, whose sway
Extends o'er sea and land;
Now wondereth all men at thy intellectual ken;
Earth seemed transparent in thy hand.
Perhaps, unconscious of thy strength,

POEMS BY JOHN FAY

Thy mind no glory sought,
But with a giant's might,
Thou hast fixed the ensign bright
Beyond the outposts in the realm of thought.
And generations yet to be
Shall revel in those thoughts of thine,
And ages shall roll past,
And yet, thy fame shall last,
And none shall come to write thy name
Beyond thy line.

DENVER

I saw within a dried-up land,
A desert at a mountain's base;
A trackless, uninviting place,
Swept by hot winds and shifting sand.
The mountain rose from out the West.
To meet a sky serene and clear —
Rose in the thin blue atmosphere
In massive strength, from base to crest.
In after years I looked once more
Upon the scene. The sun shone bright,
And lo, a city flashed in sight
Where all was weary waste before.
A grand new city of the plain,
And gardens bloomed and water ran,
And there was food for beast and man,
And victory for hand and brain.

POEMS BY JOHN FAY

SPRING THOUGHTS

Each year, the same old toil we meet,
 Neath the same old sun, with the same old flame.
The same old earth is beneath our feet,
 But the faces of friends are not the same;
No, not the same, for the happiest faces
 That beamed upon life's earliest spring,
If not lying under the sod, show traces
 Of time or care or suffering's sting.
But again, the birds around us are singing,
 And the blue is above and the green below;
Again the flowers around us are springing,
 Even as they sprung in the long ago.
And some shall bloom for the lowly and weak,
 And time-honored Hymen shall have his share,
For the blushes that come to the bride's fair cheek
 Shall glow beneath the flowers in her hair.
Then sow the seeds for the harvest treasure,
 And twine the garland while you may,
For there cometh a time when human pleasure
 Shall end in the winter of cold decay.

MY KANSAS HOME

Some men may seek through long weary years,
 With an eager and anxious look,
In every realm, both east and west,

POEMS BY JOHN FAY

For some bright Arcadian nook;
But as for me, you will never see
Me pull up my stakes and roam
From the trees that grow
And the winds that blow
Around my Kansas home.

Some may fame and fortune find,
In cities thronged and old,
And some from out the rugged West
Wrest shining heaps of gold.
But as for me, no land or sea
Will ever tempt me to roam.
I will take smaller gains
And the quiet that reigns
Around my Kansas home.

Some may praise the music and art
Of some far-off foreign land,
Wherever, in wide cathedral vaults,
Swell rolling anthems grand.
For me, there is a minstrelsy
Not equalled 'neath Heavens dome.
'Tis the birds that sing,
In the joyous spring
Around my Kansas home.

RETROSPECTIVE

When the clouds of life hang thick and black,
My memory often surges back
And bids unto my views arise

POEMS BY JOHN FAY

Much sweeter scenes and brighter skies.
Then memory, on its backward flow,
Brings up the scenes of long ago.
The cottage 'neath the wooded hill
Where oft I heard the whippoorwill;
The giant oak that threw its shade
O'er the tufted grass on which I played;
The maple grove, the distant hill
That shut out the cold world's chill;
The little streamlet's swollen flow,
The melting of the drifted snow,
And the thunder shower, when I was a boy,
Each had its own peculiar joy.
I have traveled many miles since then,
And learned the wiles and ways of men,
And yet, may travel in many a clime,
And see strange sights and scenes sublime.
But never again will come to me
That happy boyhood's ecstasy,
Or know again such sweet delights
As when gazing on those rustic sights.
The spring of life is replete with hope,
And manhood comes with broader scope
Of thoughts and feelings, temptation's pains,
And endless worry for hearts and brains.
As forward through life we journey on,
Our early dreams fade one by one,
And the deeper thoughts and the broader view
Proved things were false we believed were true.

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